The

COMMONWEAL

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FOUNDED BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

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War Aims Are Crystallizing

FRANCE AND BRITAIN do not want more specific talk about war aims to interfere with their lining up of the neutral states. Yet popular demands for more definite objectives continue to grow, especially in England. The British Labor Party goes so far as to suggest that peace terms should respect Germany's territorial integrity, call for lifting the blockade and provide for large-scale collaboration toward Germany's economic revival. France and Britain still hew to the line of the overthrow of the Hitler régime and the restoration of Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland. Germany for her part says she is fighting to free the world from British domination. Italy intimates she must have territorial compensations. Russia says nothing. So much for the general objectives, to which must be added such thorny specific points as Poland's post-war boundaries on the Baltic. All the nations, neutral and belligerent, seem to agree on one war aim: the formation of a European commonwealth. Polish officials are already making friendly overtures to their former Czech enemies, Italy and Turkey are busy in the Balkans, while according to Herr von Papen, Germany wants a federation too. That is a hopeful indication, although if such a development means that any one nation or group is to be in the saddle, trial by battle is still indicated. The formation of such a union to secure the well-being and security of the now-divided peoples would constitute an excellent reason for calling a European conference to negotiate a peace before it is too late.

Trial by Battle?

"High Economic Command" or Real Federation?

THE FRENCH AND ENGLISH agreement on "common action in the following fields: air, munitions, raw materials, oil, food, shipping and economic warfare," has a real bearing on this idea of supranational federation. It may be simply a war measure, similar to action taken after three hard years of the last war, but the world hopes it may be the first practical step to a peace measure. It would have to be more than the League of Nations; it would have to be a federation which tops the sovereignty of the constituent states. The logic of such a federation presents no great problems, but it must undergo the hazards of organic growth if it is to flourish, and those hazards are formidable indeed. It is not too soon to begin asking questions which have to be faced in the process.

Anglo-French Pooling

How much area should the imagined federation cover? Is it to be a United States of Europe alone, or include also the colonial and affiliated areas attached to European nations, or is it to include Asia and the Americas too? It seems much too soon to take it for granted that this country must stay out. How similar must the internal régimes of the constituent states be? The Inter-Democracy Federal Unionists, propagandizing Clarence Streit's "Union Now" ideas, insist in doctrinaire fashion on an ill-defined constitutional sameness (only 15 nations are recognized as clean to begin with), to the hurt, it seems sure, of a working and stable federation. Then the problem of differing physical scales of living within the federation must be faced. How even must the industrialization, the wage scales, the standards of living be within any possible framework? The English and French may soon meet the need of providing for "equal distribution between them of any limitation." How could that be arranged over a wide area so that one section is not exploiting another and so that all sections would accept the general decisions without impatience, enmity, secession? Perhaps the history of the American colonies, the Confederated States, the United States will have a new importance in history.

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A Canadian's Good Word

CANADIANS are so generally of a "some fight —some do not" disposition that it seemed like a cool breeze after a torpid August day to hear Cardinal Villeneuve saying "the government of the United States will most probably weigh heavily in the balance of peace after the war is over, especially if not drawn into the conflict." Here is a prelate of a belligerent nation coming very close to advising the United States to keep out of the war, and some of those who consider our entrance into the conflict likely—or even necessary—should ponder his words. There are people who insist that if we remain neutral we will have no moral right to participate in determining what peace shall follow the war. There are others, and evidently the Cardinal Archbishop of Quebec is among them, who feel that only by our remaining neutral can we wisely and judiciously participate in making that peace. The Cardinal also said something that may seem very trite, very obvious, but it is worth quoting despite that, if only because it is generally forgotten: "I see no hope for lasting peace in the world unless men turn back to the Christian foundations of society and acknowledge that this dark and bitter period of wars has arisen from ignoring the authority of God. . . ."

Keep Out!

Church, State and Secularism

THOSE DIEHARDS of eighteenth century rationalism, reactionaries of philosophic agnosticism, conservatives of materialistic empiricism—the *Nation* and the *New Republic*—have undertaken once again to falsify American history and tradition as it relates to education. In answer to the Pope's criticism of American schools, the *Nation* warns his American advisers that "the bitter intolerance of the Ku Klux Klan and similar groups is still lurking just below the surface," and goes a long way to identify one of the "similar groups" and to show that the intolerance is not below any surface at all. Here there is room only to make a few assertions: The separation of Church and State, truly a "basic American doctrine," is not identical with secular education, "forced within the narrow limits of materialism or of rationalism." The separation of Church and State in the United States and the noble toleration of our country have not always in our history imposed upon our publicly aided or supported or operated schools the non-religiousness and secularism characteristic of them in recent years. Before the development of the states of the Northwest Territory, before Horace Mann and before the mid-nineteenth century, religion was an essential element in the nation's schools. And now, the re-entrance of religion into schools supported in whole or in part by public money would not endanger the separation of Church and State nor religious toleration, nor, since it seems about the only present worry, irreligious toleration. "Secular education is but one aspect of separation of Church and State," the *New Republic* says. Did the *New Republic* mean *one* aspect, or that *only* secular education can exist with a separation of Church and State? The diehards of philosophic liberalism always sound as though they were plumping for a church-state of Secularism, a false religion and false and tyrannical politics.

Education's Liberty League

"Basic Houses" Cross the Tracks

OUTSIDE CHICAGO, in Hammond, Ind., a program of selling unfinished houses to be developed by the purchasing family itself to as good and complete a home as it wants and is able to create was started some time ago by the enterprising Hoess Bros. In that development, factory and mill workers buy the "basic houses" and enough land to form a small subsistence homestead. Completing and running the home and working on the acre or two are expected to be the hobby and lay-off activity of the owners, and the homes are considered permanent. Now the basic house idea has been started in a white-collar suburb of Chicago: the first home and lot was just sold for $2,250. Buyers in the new Glen Ellyn development will take over the houses in whatever stage of completion they want (after they have become weather-proof), and will pay proportionately. The lot will be big enough to have a decent garden but not big enough to account for the full spare time of the resident or furnish his family much real subsistence. Thirty houses are already on the way. Purchasers are expected to consider their homes as temporary: the white collar workers will be expecting to see "their ship come in," enabling them to move to higher priced establishments. The basic house is supposed to be characteristic of the successful Swedish building program, where the low-income buyer is enabled to help in the construction, from foundation digging up, and it certainly helps solve the cost problem as well as anything that has been tried in the United States. It is important as an enduring social pattern too, organizing the finances and time of families. As such it is more fruitful in Hammond than in Glen Ellyn. Stability of residence is a quality in society not sufficiently prized, because, perhaps, when it is forced, it is too easily mixed up with stratified class and status. The independence, health, money savings and variety in living brought by work for one's own subsistence are also benefits which white collar workers can scarcely afford to overlook.

Home-Finished Homes

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A Setback in Safety

Children's Fatalities Rise

NEW YORK CITY has worked determinedly and hard on its motor safety campaign in the last few years, and has attained heartening results. Digit by digit, the figures of death on the highways of the city have gone down—and in no category more satisfyingly than in that of child fatalities. By common agreement, the hazards to children were held to be of first concern, and as a result the fatal accidents in this column dropped spectacularly—50 percent, to be accurate, in the five years preceding 1938. The police, the schools, the playground and park authorities, the homes all cooperated in varying degrees to effect this remarkable result, and it began to be felt that New York—despite the vast busyness and unrelenting pressure which would seem to crowd all consideration for children out of the picture—would become a haven and model of child safety. Unfortunately, this trend shows a sharp change for the ten months ending with the October of this year. Child fatalities mounted 17 percent in that period, making a total of 124 killed in highway accidents as against 106 of the period just previous. The listing of causes shows that almost all these deaths were avoidable, and would have been avoided if their victims had been taught to obey the simplest safety rules. Mayor La Guardia, who is understandably deeply disturbed at these statistics, points out how directly parental negligence is involved in the greater number of these accidents, which resulted mainly from running into roadways or playing there, crossing against lights or away from crossing places, stealing rides, bicycling and roller-skating carelessly. Describing the school and police precautions which are taken in the city and the recent expansion of city playgrounds to thrice their former extent, he tells parents plainly that the city cannot be solely responsible for child safety—that the homes must cooperate also. It is a tragic clincher to his argument that almost half of the fatalities listed have as their victims children under six years of age.

The Problem of Subsistence Farms

Neither Hoe nor Factory

"BACK TO THE LAND" is an excellent slogan for an economy that has become too centralized, too callous in discarding human beings, too oblivious of human values. And the existence of 400,000 American subsistence farms, with an average gross income of $425, in 1929, indicates that it can be done. Some of the obstacles to success are suggested by William G. Roylance in the current *New Republic*. There is no doubt that overenthusiastic agrarians tends to rhapsodize the opportunities of tilling the soil, to minimzie the cash outlays necessary for any family. Farming requires experience and intelligence to a marked degree. Growing and marketing conditions must be propitious. Labor-saving devices must be utilized, not only to forestall avoidable drudgery but also if the land is to yield a decent living. Mr. Roylance does not go into the problem of mass production on the land, although he cites approvingly the low production costs attained through efficient mechanization. There is a mean between the giant mechanized food factory and the sharecropper's primitive farm. Genuine advance will make the most of rural electrification and machinery operated by only a few. Agrobiology continues to forecast astounding acreage yields—for most soils and crops it seems to hold the key to successful small farming. The third element needed is adequate preparation for thousands of Americans who could successfully settle on the land.

British Postoffice to Fire Cats

Plea for a Second Thought

ONE OF THE informal bonds between the Britons and us is our common attitude toward cats. (We have the same attitude also toward dogs and horses and such, but this is a cat paragraph.) The attitude goes far beyond a widespread appreciation of the charm and companionability of the domestic feline. That you will doubtless find everywhere, in some degree—even skipping the ancient Egyptians, whose cat worship is an entirely different story. The range of charming cat anecdotes is wide, embracing such diversely owned animals as the "ecumenical kittens" of one of the Popes (who called the gentle one "Orbi" and the turbulent one "Urbi") to the Fatima (we think her name was) of Mohammed, who went to sleep on his sleeve, and so made cat history. It is not, to repeat, this kind of warm affection for cats which we have in common with the British, so much as a sense that they must be decently cared for; along with other animals, they are protected by law in both countries, and this is a good deal more significant than the fact that they are valued as decorative pets. With this preamble, we now record that the British postal authorities are evidently planning to get rid of the cats who have been doing emergency rat extermination since the outbreak of the war. We cannot understand this, and we wish in these presents to appeal to the better nature of the Britons and remind them of their honorable legal tradition in the matter. It is an *a fortiori* argument, indeed, since the postal cats took hold when a rodent invasion was threatened. What if the cats *do* cost "the authorized weekly allowance of one shilling"? (Incidentally, we cannot imagine what for, since they eat rats, and Margaret Halsey says there is no milk in England.) We ask Britain to be mindful of her past and let the cats remain.

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Revolution in Germany?

The Monarchists hold the leverage among the crystallizing opposition groups within Germany

By **Albert Brandt**

HITLER is sitting on a powder barrel. Until the bomb went off in Munich on November 8, missing Hitler by ten minutes, many observers believed that the powder was too damp for an early explosion. Now they are inclined to think differently, even though it would still be a grave error to underestimate the strength of the Nazis. Hitler has tried to placate popular discontent with political and military victories. For a time he was thoroughly successful, but there is a limit to the amount of foodstuffs which these triumphs can replace. The people are beginning to seek more humble reasons—measurable in butter and underclothes—for continuing their allegiance to the Nazi government.

As the war continues signs of rebelliousness in Germany can no longer be concealed. In Czechoslovakia rebellion has reached grave proportions; Czech incidents have filled many American newspaper columns the past few days.

After the first flush of enthusiasm Austria begins to view the Nazi anschluss with growing skepticism. Goering's command to the Austrians to "Spit on your fists and work hard!" has scarcely proved popular. Wages—although frozen by Nazi decree—have actually declined about 30 percent through increased deductions for dues, taxes, etc. The Nazis have wisely bettered conditions for the very lowest categories of workers who formed the bulk of the unemployed and it is this element, and the youth, whose enthusiasm has been least impaired since March, 1938, when the Nazis came in. But there are wide sections of the population which feel that Austria has become the tail of a madly darting kite plunging to disaster.

Trouble in old Germany

Inside the boundaries of Germany proper the war has accentuated all the grievances of the people against the Nazi government.

In the Rhineland and the industrial west there have been several manifestations of anti-Nazi activity. Furthermore, the mine district of Upper Silesia where Dr. Robert Ley, Nazi Labor Front leader, was once hissed off the public platform, is hostile to the war program. The German press complained several months ago that in the Ruhr miners were refusing overtime work. Derisively called "bummel" (hookey) shifts, these absences last February seriously interfered with coal output. Stokers and trimmers on German ships have quietly resisted the gradual lowering of food standards. "The menu determines the steam pressure," is one of the slogans making the rounds. During the winter of 1938-9 a "slow-down" on the German railroads seriously impeded Reich traffic and even today the railroads are a loose cog in the Nazi war machine.

The German peasantry today listen in sullen silence to Nazi spokesmen they at one time used to cheer. Overworked and overburdened they have become the granary serfs of the Fatherland with only nominal control over their land.

The war suddenly threw the Nazi industrial program out of gear. Overnight 1,000,000 men lost their jobs due to the slowup in industry caused by lack of raw materials and the British blockade. Retail trade has fallen off by 50 percent and about 50 percent of foreign trade has been cut off. These are facts which suggest trouble where Hitler can least afford it—among the middle class and working class masses. "Shop keepers," Goering stressed, "must remember they are now public servants."

It is the German middle class which viewed a war with Britain as inconceivable, and was most surprised. Those outside Germany cannot imagine what a shock it was to Mr. Average German to discover that Prime Minister Chamberlain, who was his hero of September, 1938, had suddenly become the villain of the second act. It severely shook morale and necessitated the ban on listening to foreign broadcasts which the Nazi régime imposed. Finally the agreement with Stalin shattered forever the faith of the middle class and the industrialists in Hitler's anti-Bolshevik promises.

This analysis of the situation is not one which might be realized in the next few weeks or months. Even if the Nazi party is losing its hold on the population, it has not lost it completely. Hitler is still adored by the mass of the people, who will not believe that their Fuehrer knows the bad features of the Nazi régime. The more victories Hitler achieves the more the people will be proud of German superiority. But hungry stomachs will upset the greatest victories. Germany, then, may be compared today to a psychotic individual on

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the verge of nervous breakdown. The tensions are accumulating which lead to an explosion. What form will it take? In a nation, political and social contradictions take the place of emotional conflicts in the individual. Several groups in Germany stand prepared to take advantage of these contradictions. Who are they?

The Left-Wing

First there is the much publicized left-wing underground movement. This comprises the Social Democrats, the Communists and independent radicals who have split with both movements. The Stalin-Hitler Pact has diminished the prestige of the underground Communists and many of them feel that they have been sold down the river. The Communists are now suspect throughout the underground movement and in several instances they have been accused of serving as agent-provocateurs. During the Independence Day celebration in Czechoslovakia it was remarked that a truck filled with Communists was allowed by the police to circulate through the streets of Prague distributing Communist literature and spreading the slogan "Long live Stalin!"

However there are a number of Communists in Germany who still regard Stalin's policy as a maneuver and wait for a chance to pursue the orthodox revolutionary policy. If Germany is defeated they believe the Red Army will assist them in establishing a Communist régime. It is possible that many left-wing Nazis who foresee the possibility of a German defeat would prefer a Bolshevik government to any alternative that might offer itself. Certainly the mechanics of Nazi party rule is so closely akin to that of the Communists that the entire apparatus could easily be taken over, lock, stock and barrel by a Communist government.

The fact that Communist propaganda has intensified inside Germany since the war began shows two things: 1. That the Nazi bureaucracy has relaxed its proscription of the Communists and 2. that Stalin is planning for a possible overturn within Germany. Many left-wing Nazis in the lower brackets have already squared themselves with their possible future Communist bosses by easing up local pressure on the Reds.

On the other side of the picture, however, there are several obstacles to the Communist hope. The Communists are generally discredited among the masses of German workers and their rule would be considered merely an intensification of Nazi pressure. The large Catholic population would surely be a formidable opponent to the advance of Communism and the German peasantry, still staggering under the shock of Hitler's peace with Bolshevism, would resist a Communist régime. So, ironically enough, the Communists cannot count on either the proletarian or the peasant masses. Their strength will probably come from within the ranks of the Nazis themselves who will try to save themselves by changing the form of their government while retaining its substance.

The Social Democrats maintain an active organization in Germany and have done valiant work in organizing an underground trade union movement acting inside the Nazi Labor Front. Their supporters are primarily the old socialists of pre-Hitler days. They have failed to make an impression upon the youth and it is doubtful if they can retrieve the enormous prestige they once boasted. They are has-beens as far as Germany politics is concerned and the attitude of the people is that they muffed their chance when they had it. They can therefore serve a purpose in pointing out the shortcomings of the Nazi government, but their positive program will hardly have wide popular support. It must be borne in mind that the youth—the vigorous and often determining element in a movement which is in flux—have been trained in totalitarian discipline. Democracy as such has no appeal to them as a slogan. They want tangible successes, national, military, economic.

The Monarchists

This leads us to a discussion of the monarchist movement in Germany which has recently crept into the news. After the Munich bombing the Gestapo pretended to find reason for clamping down on the monarchists. Dozens of them were arrested and several of their titular leaders interned. Among those mentioned in dispatches as having been suspect were ex-Crown Prince Freidrich Wilhelm, son of the old Kaiser now in exile at Doorn, Holland, Prince Wilhelm of Hanover, Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria and two representatives of the noble Coburg-Gotha line.

In Bavaria leaflets have been distributed calling for the re-establishment of an independent kingdom under Prince Rupprecht. "We are ready to fight for you, Royal Highness," read one leaflet addressed to Rupprecht, "and for the freedom of our Bavarian fatherland till our last breath. But *never* for Prussia and Hitler the Usurper."

It is not the welter of confusion and romance in the monarchist program that attracts a wide following. It is rather the belief that a monarchy would restore peace to Germany and receive the support of the Allied governments. The recent disclosures about the plans of the Allies for Central Europe in the event of an Allied victory lend substance to this belief. Reports from Paris indicate that a program is in preparation to establish a Danubian confederation including Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, part of Poland and Moravia. Crown Prince Otto von Habsburg is suggested as the ruler with Prince Stahremberg perhaps as strong man. Mussolini has given his

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consent and Italy may be expected to veer closer to the Allies in the weeks ahead.

If a monarchy is proposed to stabilize that area which was formerly the old Austrian empire, Allied spokesmen are asking why can't monarchy effect the same change in Germany? Indeed, Lord Alfred Duff Cooper has voiced this possibility.

As the war continues, bringing lowering food rations for Germans and intensifying the strain bearing down on the Nazi régime, conservative circles in Berlin will find the idea of monarchy exceedingly intriguing. In addition to Allied support—there is the virtual promise of Chamberlain that he will make peace with a "peaceful government" if Hitler is excluded—Army and government leaders in Berlin know that a monarchy could be "talked up" to the population. The peasantry have fond memories of the "good old days" of bursting barns and filled stock-yards. The working class is more dubious about those days but, betrayed by the left and oppressed by the Nazis, the industrial population will not be inclined to look the gift-horse of monarchy too carefully in the mouth. After all they were able to have relatively free unions and their own political organizations under the Kaiser. At the same time the conservative Junkers and industrialists would regard a return to monarchy as a bulwark against either brown or red Bolshevism.

The German intellectuals have been incredibly humiliated by the Nazi régime which through Dr. Goebbels has castigated them as "men of possessions and education who trust more in the power of pure and cold intellect than in that of the glowing, idealistic heart." To them the days of the Kaiser must appear as the glorious period of academic freedom and independence from political servitude. In the days of disintegrating Nazism they will cling to the movement which promises to combine authority with greater freedom for the German university world.

Another significant section of the population, the Catholics, are resisting the steadily rising tide of Nazi persecution and looking for a change. The final act of oppression so portentous in its meaning to German Catholics was the attempted suppression by the Nazis of the first Encyclical Letter of Pope Pius XII. German Catholics have been traditionally monarchist and the monarchist movement within Germany has a strong Catholic following which has been added to since it has become apparent that Hitler's aim is to abolish the authority of the Church. Since the early days of the Nazi government when many Catholics believed it possible to reconcile their faith with Hitler they have learned in the words of the Holy See that "Now no one can fail to see how the claim to absolute autonomy for the state stands in open opposition to this natural way that is inherent in man—nay denies it utterly. . . ."

The top leadership of the Nazi Party, including Goering, Hess and Von Ribbentrop, is reported to be divided on the question of continuing the war. Goering is said to be desperately maneuvering for an early cessation of hostilities. It is even rumored that he has flouted the orders of Adolf Hitler by refraining from a large-scale attack on the Allies. In London circles he is regarded by many as a "safe" Nazi and some base their hopes for an early peace on him. But Goering could not take over power without a principal. The unifying force of monarchy would serve this purpose. Goering is on record as having said that monarchy is not incompatible with National Socialism. He has maintained strong friendships with avowed monarchists and regarded favorably the now forgotten plan broached in London last spring of an extensive British loan to Germany for the purpose of changing her war industry into a peace-time industry.

The situation, then, may be summed up as follows: The Nazis still give evidence of great strength, but Hitler can continue in power only by a striking military victory followed by a slackening of the grinding economic tension. At present this seems scarcely possible. At best it now looks as though the war may drag on as a stalemate for a long time. This would mean demanding sacrifices from the German people which they will increasingly refuse to give freely. Opposition will grow. The Communists may be largely discounted, while the democratic forces are held responsible for the post-war years. Besides, there is no effective democratic tradition to serve as a guide. The monarchists have a tradition, a program and a following. They are in a sense a middle ground between the democrats and the Nazis and will command a wide following. Interestingly enough, it is the monarchist principle and not any specific candidate that more and more Germans are endorsing. If they turn to monarchy there will be a large handful of monarchist candidates to choose from: several members of the Hohenzollern family, Grand Duke Ernst August zu Braunschweig and Lueneburg, Philip von Hessen, Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria or even a blue-blooded general like the popular Bavarian Von Epp. Finally it is the monarchists who hold the trump card of probable Allied support.

The Allies will only make peace with a régime which they consider reliable in foreign policy and stable internally. Germany will need for its economic reconstruction after the war—defeated or victorious—vast loans which will be offered only to a government which has the sympathy of those nations which will be able to give such help. The conservative elements among the Nazis and the German population recognize this fact too well not to be swayed in their consideration of a political force of government by these factors.

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At the College Level

By RAYMOND J. McCALL

THE FRIDAY afternoon (October 27) session of the National Catholic Alumni Federation convention (the convention subject was "Man and Modern Secularism") was a climactic complement to the discussions of the earlier sessions, detailed by Dr. McNeill in THE COMMONWEAL for November 10. The convention served well the purpose of finding means to achieve the inner unity of men and the harmony of society. Our education must be directed to picking up and reassembling —reintegrating—the pieces on the foundation of a rock, for recent centuries have torn the thoughts and feelings and knowledge of individual men and the pattern of society into conflicting (literally warring) fragments.

Under the heading, "The Return to American Higher Catholic Education of the Formal Teaching of Theology as a Science," Father Gerald B. Phelan and Father Francis J. Connell sought in the reintroduction of theology into the college and university classroom a new and concrete expression of integral Catholic educational life and an indispensable aid to the apostolate of Catholic Action. Rooted in Christian principles and expounded with a vigor and simplicity that almost made one forget how seldom his points are stressed by educators, Father Phelan's plea for the necessity of theology as the architectonic science in a system of Christian wisdom and as the differentiating note of Catholic from secular higher education met with almost unanimous approval.

I say almost. For Father McGucken, S.J., of St. Louis University had some "realist" (dare one say "tough-minded"?) scruples concerning the practicability of making theology an integral part of the college and university curriculum. The problem of *means,* Father McGucken insisted, must not be overlooked here. Even in the Middle Ages the completion of a full course in philosophy was required before admission to theological study. Does not the necessity for a thorough grounding in philosophy as a preparatory study to theology obtain today as well? The implication seemed to be that undergraduates might not know the meaning of the words. How therefore can we include *both* philosophy and theology—especially in the undergraduate curriculum? Father Connell in his paper proposed the substitution of theology for advanced catechism, for Father McGucken implied satisfaction with the present system.

Apparently to silence Father McGucken's doubts of "compendious theology" and in criticism of Father Connell's suggestion to include *all* the manuals, Father Slavin, of the Catholic University, maintained that one textbook should be sufficient — the *Summa Theologica* of Saint Thomas. For with the text of Saint Thomas the basis of instruction, the study of philosophy and theology need not—indeed cannot—be separated.

Father Slavin's close sympathy with the Chicago University-St. John's College plan of liberal education through the great books was evident throughout his remarks. On this issue is it not permissible for a layman to hesitate, and, granting the superiority of the text of Saint Thomas to most or any of the philosophical or theological manuals, to doubt that the text of Saint Thomas is by itself sufficient? Surely Father Slavin would not maintain that the text of Saint Thomas is in itself adequate to meet all the difficulties which the modern student must face. Further, is it not at least doubtful that the text of Saint Thomas is sufficient even to the understanding of Saint Thomas? Don't we have to study the problems thrown up by history since the thirteenth century as well as the historical environment in which the book was written? Meanwhile what shall we do with all the commentators from Cajetan on? A Thomist like Maritain has recognized that our primary task (after personal sanctity) is one of integration—an integration of the wisdom of the ancients with the material and social advances of the moderns. And if the judgment of Maritain may appropriately be invoked here, may we ask those who advocate the theory of education by the "100 best books" (with the *Summa Theologica* the *pièce-de-résistance* in philosophy and theology), if they regard the *Summa* as self-integrating? Or do they seriously believe that acquaintance with the logical and grammatical arts *suffices* to the understanding of Saint Thomas?

Father Moore, it seemed to me, struck a final note of importance in a very modestly stated but significant exhortation to teachers of theology and religion to make the supreme effort of relating these subjects to the everyday life of the student.

Viewing the Friday session in retrospect and endeavoring to relate its work to that of the earlier discussions, it seemed that the NCAF convention had achieved its purpose. It had made clear directly or indirectly (under the attrition of divergent viewpoints) the major principles of a new and vital Catholic educational program. If we follow Dr. Pollock, Dr. Purcell and Father Gabel in bringing past and contemporary history to bear on our educational and kindred problems; if we recognize with Father O'Connell and others the menace which modern secularism presents, putting off religion, philosophy and morality into a separated and unreal division of life; if we acknowledge with Father Phelan and Father Connell a scientific theology as a directive discipline and a spur for Catholic Action; if we go to Saint Thomas for our basic principles, and if finally we make an effort really to integrate with our whole treasure of Catholic wisdom the best features of modern culture and life, then our Catholic education in America should have a happy future indeed.

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Childrens' Books, 1939

LAST YEAR I was able to report rather favorably on the output of the publishers so far as literary pabulum for little folks was concerned. It seemed to me that the books reached a high level, both as to text and illustrations. This year is less happy. I have spent days looking at juveniles—hours in editorial sancta—and I have found very little to reward my effort. There seems to be a let-down in tone. We have arrived, say the children's editors, and all we have to do is imitate each other; the public will take care of the rest. Perhaps that is a most ungrateful sentiment, for obviously the quality of the books has not deteriorated: it is rather a matter of lack of initiative, or energy. Americans like to see expansion, improvement every year. The static does not interest us. What was done last year may have been fine, but it was not (nothing can be) perfect; it disappoints us if this year there is not some advance over last year's excellencies. And I cannot see any advance in this department of book publishing. Individual efforts deserve praise — a great deal of praise. But there is no general advance along a whole front. With one exception —Catholic childrens' books. By that I mean books with a specifically Catholic theme, not books which would be quite acceptable to Catholics, but do not deal with a religious subject matter: books in the purely secular sphere, that relate to yaks or penguins or llamas. Last year it was necessary to pad the list of "Ten Catholic Books" with items that had not been published in 1938 in order to come up to the appointed number. This year no such ruse is necessary. There are enough and to spare for our purpose.

My pessimism may lead some readers to think that none of this year's un-Catholic crop of books for the young are worth buying. I should not for an instant want this impression to govern anyone. The books listed herewith are, I firmly believe, good books for children (unless marked to the contrary). It is merely that they are much like other books — last year's and the year before's. . . . And that inspires a philosophic reflection. Some months ago I was talking shop with one of the editors of one of America's biggest circulation magazines — a poet, whose verse has often appeared in THE COMMONWEAL. He remarked rather sadly that in this world of "social significance," literature, in any pure sense, was dead. People just don't read poetry any more; they aren't likely to read fiction unless it relates to economic or social or political phenomena of the day. The one exception, he pointed out, is the detective story. Here there is a simple pattern, which everyone accepts. A crime is committed. Let's find the criminal. It was with a certain sinking feeling that I found, last summer, one of my favorite sleuths tracking down company labor spies in a union murder. "Sing me a song of social significance." . . . But my editor friend forgot one field of pure literature which continues to flourish with a minimum of social implication . . . books for the young. The thing has got to be a serious problem. Almost, I might say, a menace. Children's books always have been (and quite properly) written with an eye to the elders. Now they are getting to be written entirely for the elders, without even so much as an eye to the youngsters. Take the matter of Daniel Boone. It happens that after a great deal of both quiet and hectic work my friend John Bakeless has produced a serious, full length biography of that interesting character. A good book, both for young and old. At the same time James Daugherty, America's best

Ten Catholic Books

(1) (2) Lauren Ford. THE AGELESS STORY. Dodd, Mead. $2.50. A book which will mightily please some and irritate others. Look before you leap. I like it fine, but I know that to a lot of people Bethlehem, Conn., is *not* Bethlehem, Palest.

(1) Marigold Hunt. A LIFE OF OUR LORD FOR CHILDREN. Sheed and Ward. $1.25. THE COMMONWEAL reviewer of this book decided the author was a Girl Guide. She has since admitted the soft impeachment. But in spite of that, she has written a nice book.

(1) Joan Windham. THE NEW CAROL. Illustrated by Jeanne Hebbelynck. Sheed and Ward. $1.25. An innocuous text with swell pix.

(2) Hilda van Stockum. FRANCIE ON THE RUN. Viking. $2.00. A pleasant Irish story. The hero should be about twice his given age to be credible. Some will think this encourages delinquency, but by such standards saints have been delinquents.

(2) (3) Mary Kiely. O'DONEL OF DESTINY. Illustrated by Victor Dowling. Oxford. $2.00. For somewhat older children. The author is editor of the Pro Parvulis book club. Good and Irish.

(1) (2) Maud and Miska Petersham. STORIES FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT. Winston. $2.75. It is hard to get anything like this that carries an *imprimatur*. But here you are. I prefer my Old Testament straight.

(2) Harold Jerome Heagney. BLOCKADE RUNNER. Illustrated by Bernard Westmacott. Longmans. $1.50. The story of John Bannister Tabb from a very, very Southern point of view. Catholics *can* be patriots!

(2) Agnes C. Lehman. THE FLAHERTYS OF ARAN. Dodd, Mead. $2.00. Another Irish story, and excellent. Too bad the author isn't much as an illustrator.

(2) (3) Richard Bennett. HANNAH MARIE. Doubleday. $1.50. Another Irish. And good.

Valenti Angelo. GOLDEN GATE. Viking. $2.00. Last year Angelo wrote a book I felt Catholics should be warned *against*. This year he does a job that should be a joy—the experiences of a young Italian immigrant in California. It isn't precisely a Catholic book, but the story of the dog which gets into church during Mass is thoroughly in Catholic tradition.

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(1) Recommended by the St. Paul Guild bookshop.
(2) Recommended by the Pro Parvulis Book Club.
(3) Recommended in the Boston *Pilot's* 1939 list of books.

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A Practical Guide

rococo illustrator, has girded his loins and done a *child's* life of the same interesting character. It is Mr. Daugherty's first attempt at writing (so far as I know) and his most ambitious job of illustrating. The writing is swell, and the illustrating up to par. But his brain child is no more a children's book than would be a good piece of limberger cheese. Fine for adults. Provocative and handsome (adjectives that could never be used about Bakeless). But a strange diet indeed for the young idea. And so it is with many a juvenile, many, indeed, of those I list hereafter. My only defense is to put a very tentative *"a"* after each listing that strikes me as being more literature than children's literature.

Which brings me to a delicate subject. A Mrs. Ets has been troubled for some years with a problem (not by any means a *new* problem). When sissy or buddy is confronted with the fact of a new life coming into the family, how do you answer sissy's or buddy's questions? Does baby come from under a cabbage leaf? Is he brought by a fairy? The dear Middle Ages probably had no difficulties about all this. Baby was born of mother. Somehow I can't quite conceive that the Renaissance had many difficulties on this score either. But came dear Queen Victoria, and the trouble began—not that it was her fault. It was just that machines were doing everything else, so why be biological? Alas, the Victorian compromise, like all compromises, is at best a temporary solution. Sissy's and buddy's question remains. Mrs. Ets (sage lady) decided that "very small children were not interested in, or ready for, sex." But she also decided that "when they asked about babies they did not want to be told about the sex life of flowers. . . ." What inspired her to a solution of the matter was seeing the Loyola School of Medicine exhibit of human embryos at the Chicago world's fair in 1933-34. She decided that a carefully accurate story of how babies develop from "a life too small to be seen at all" to the pink object of terror delivered to the house after mother had been absent for two weeks was one solution of the problem. So she set to work and produced "The Story of a Baby" (Viking, $2.50). It is a book which has already produced much controversy. In fact it is *the* innovation of the year. The cabbage-patch school has waxed indignant. They just don't want to have any truck with it. The materialist, secularist, naturalist (anti-God) school have equally rejoiced. The Catholics have been caught between the upper and the nether mill-stone. There is no reason for that. The silly advertising of the publishers ("a first book for any child") remains silly. But for parents with some sense who really want to give a rational answer to sissy's and buddy's question, the book can be a godsend . . . if they use their brains. . . .

Ten General Books

Walt Disney. PINOCCHIO. Random. $1.00. Kids that go to the movies—and kids that don't—will like this. Proved by trial and error.

Margaret McKenny and Edith F. Johnston. A BOOK OF WILD FLOWERS. Macmillan. $2.00. A book like this makes you sad—because there couldn't be more kinds of flowers in it. But obviously there can't be, without its turning into a botany.

(2) C. W. Anderson. BLACK, BAY AND CHESTNUT. Macmillan. $2.50. Anyone—from Park Avenue to the deep South—who likes horses will be thrilled by this one. Pix and short, matter-of-fact stories about a score of America's finest.

(1) (2) Rosemary Lamkey. The LONELY DWARF. Holt. $1.00. The production of a fourteen-year-old. But don't let that prejudice you. Really a fine book.

Elizabeth Goudge. THE SISTER OF THE ANGELS. Illustrated by C. Walter Hodges. Coward McCann. $3.50. A Dickensish sort of story, very Anglican indeed, and intensely Christian. Well written and really moving.

(2) Jack Bechdolt. ROSCOE. Illustrated by Decie Merwin. Oxford. $1.00. A most pleasant story about a boy who wore specs and still was popular. He has adventures with pandas and others—mostly pandas.

(2) Elisabeth B. Hamilton (Ed.). REGINALD BIRCH—HIS BOOK. Harcourt. $2.50. Stories and poems by all sorts of authors—with Birch illustrations. In case you forget—"Little Lord Fauntleroy."

(2) Mildred Criss. MARY STUART, YOUNG QUEEN OF SCOTS. Dodd, Mead. $2.50. The pix are pretty awful—illustrator's name withheld! But the story is excellently told, and that is enough, for it's a thoroughly romantic story.

(2) Phil Stong. THE HIRED MAN'S ELEPHANT. Illustrated by Doris Lee. Dodd, Mead. $2.00. *Herald-Tribune* award book for older children (12 years and up) and worth it. The author is a hardy perennial who let himself go, and the illustrator is an artist concerning whom one can only say, "Que diable allait-elle faire dans cette galère?"

Paul Brown. FIRE: THE MASCOT. Scribner. $2.00. Perhaps the reason I include this here is that I like sentimental dog stories, especially about pudding-dogs.

Animal Books for the Very Young

AS ALWAYS this is a favorite theme for books to be read aloud to or by tiny tots. Dogs, horses, cats are perennial favorites, but each year there is a crop of outlandish beasts, and by some obscure circumstance each season has its special emphasis on one particular outlander. This year it is penguins. Next year I suspect it will be pandas.

WELL, ABOUT THE PENGUIN. By Price Day. Simon and Schuster. $.75. Mostly to be read aloud while readee examines pix, which are nicest part of it all. Based on experience with telling and hence probably a good bet for the purpose.

FIRST CLOTH BOOK. By Leonard Weisgard. SECOND CLOTH BOOK. By Glen Rounds. Holiday. $1.00 each. Ideal for babies—can't be torn and won't hurt if chewed. The first deals with things, the second with animals.

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HOO! HOO! DE WITT! By Frances Duncombe. Illustrated by Jean Lamont. Holt. $1.25. Small owl's adventures.

KALU THE LLAMA. By Richard C. Gill. Illustrated. Holt. $1.00. I like this the best of the llama books, that beast being a runner up to the penguin for this year's favorite.

REMUS. By Oliver Claxton. Illustrated. Harper's. $1.25. An elephant wants a red lantern on his tail.

WALT DISNEY'S THE UGLY DUCKLING. Lippincott. $1.00. I almost put this in the ten general books list, but Pinocchio won the day.

THE BURRO THAT HAD A NAME. By Lorraine and Jerrold Beim. Illustrated by Howard Simon. Harcourt. $1.25. A Mexican (possibly a).

THE PUP CALLED CINDERELLA. By Esther Watson Remp. Illustrated by Leonard Weisgard. Bobbs. $1.25. A Bed--lington is the heroine. Pictures a little a.

THE DOG WHO LOOKED AROUND. By Leonard Hyams. Bobbs. $1.50. The world through a dog's eyes in photographs. Well done.

BARNEY OF THE NORTH. By Margaret S. Johnson and Helen Lossing Johnson. Harcourt. $1.75. A Newfoundland and the Bay of Fundy. For slightly older people.

THE STORY OF KATTOR. By Georgia Travers. Illustrated by Flavia Gág. Coward. $1.50. A toy tiger tale.

KOKWA: A LITTLE KOALA BEAR. By Teresa Kalab. Longmans. $1.50. About my favorite beast.

170 CATS. By Zhenya Gay and Pachita Crespi. Random. $1.00. You can count them.

THOMAS RETIRES. By Margaret van Doren. Viking. $1.00. A milkman's horse pines for the city. A trifle a.

FRIENDLY LITTLE JONATHAN. By Dorothy and Marguerite Bryan. Dodd, Mead. $1.00. This year's addition to the Bryan books. A little more story to it than usual.

CHUNCH THE SQUIRREL. By Elizabeth Anne Bond and Joan Elaine Rabin. Illustrated by Kurt Wiese. Dodd, Mead. $1.50. As good as any of them, and not at all a.

Stories for the Young

COUSIN TOBY. By Clare Turlay Newberry. Harper's. $1.50. A pleasant tale of how two slightly older children take care of a baby cousin.

FAIR PLAY. By Munro Leaf. Illustrated. Stokes. $1.50. The author of Ferdinand continues being didactic. Scarcely stories, but I don't know how else to classify it. Democracy for the inmates of the nursery.

LITTLE TOOT. By Hardie Gramatky. Illustrated. Putnam. $1.50. A tug boat with a will of its own.

MIKE MULLIGAN AND HIS STEAM SHOVEL. By Virginia Lee Burton. Illustrated. Houghton. $1.50. The title is sufficient description. Good fun.

A PINT OF JUDGMENT. By Elizabeth Morrow. Illustrated by Susanne Suba. Kopf. $.50. A very middle class and very pleasant story by the acting president of Smith College. Concerns Christmas.

THE SECRET. By Harold Burdekin. Dutton. $1.75. Last year it was "A Child's Grace," which I did not like at all, at all. This is the same sort of thing. Fine photos of people and things with rather pantheistic religious sentiments attached. Not for me, but there will be those who will love it.

COWHAND GOES TO TOWN. By Phil Stong. Illustrated by Kurt Wiese. Dodd, Mead. $2.00. A thoroughly unsophisticated story for slightly older boys. One of the most refreshing books of the year.

THE STUCK-UP PRINCE. By Loris Corcos. Dutton. $2.00. One of those books that parents will like perhaps even more than the children. Fine pix. (a).

WACKY, THE SMALL BOY. By Fred Schwed, Jr. Illustrated by Gregor Duncan. Simon and Schuster. $1.50. Pretty much for mom and pop rather than jr., though he may like it. (a).

A CHRISTMAS STORY. By Virginia Cole Pritchard. Illustrated by Frances Hickey. Dutton. $1.00. Rather sentimental, as such tales seem always to be, but with a religious element that is usually lacking. Not much of a one, though—just a touch.

JONNY. Written and illustrated by Eleanor Frances Lattimore. Harcourt. $1.25. A day in the life of a two-year-old. Developed from practical use with a two-year-old.

THE CHOSEN BABY. By Valentina P. Wasson. Illustrated by Hildegard Woodward. Carrick and Evans. $1.50. Designed to make easier for an adopted child some understanding of his relation to his new parents.

MADELINE. By Ludwig Bemelmans. Simon & Schuster. $2.00. Another nutty item by the irrepressable LB. Everybody will probably like it, though it is a trifle a.

THE YOUNGEST CAMEL. By Kay Boyle. Little, Brown. $2.50. One of the season's best items; a trifle a.

THE LITTLE MERMAID. By Hans Christian Anderson. Illustrated by Dorothy P. Lathrop. Macmillan. $2.50. I don't at all like the colored pix, which is disappointing coming from this artist.

TOLD UNDER THE MAGIC UMBRELLA. Illustrated by Elizabeth Orton Jones. Macmillan. $2.00. A collection mostly of contemporary stories made by the Association for Childhood Education.

THE WELL O' THE WORLD'S END. By Seumas MacManus. Illustrated by Richard Bennett. Macmillan. $2.00. Irish folklore.

LULU. Written and illustrated by Charlotte Steiner. Doubleday. $1.00. A cute number, rather a. For the very young.

THE FAMILY FROM ONE END STREET. By Eve Garnett. Vanguard. $2.00. A great success in England now available in this country.

THE STORY OF HORACE. Retold and illustrated by Alice M. Coats. Coward. $1.50. A little boy with an insatiable appetite.

PRINCESS SEPTEMBER AND THE NIGHTINGALE. By W. Somerset Maugham. Illustrated by Richard C. Jones. Oxford. $2.50. A Siamese Princess learns an essential thing about nightingales. Rather a.

WU AND LU AND LI. By Evelyn Young. Oxford. $.75. A Chinese number above the average for charm.

SUSIE MARLAR. By Lois Lenski. Oxford. $1.00. This year's addition to a series that has many devoted admirers.

MINNIE THE MERMAID. By Tom and Elizabeth Orton Jones. Oxford. $.75. A bit on the a. side, but pleasantly so.

MACARONI: AN AMERICAN TUNE. By Myrna Lock-Jones. Oxford. $.75. A bit on the a side, but pleasantly so. American boy I have yet seen, and nice, too.

JUST AROUND THE CORNER. By Catherine Beebe. Illustrated by Robb Beebe. Oxford. $1.25. I think this is the best book the Beebes have done. The pictures are much firmer and, I think, better than ever before.

CINDERS. By Katharine Gibson. Illustrated by Vera Bock. Longmans. $1.50. A novel story tied up to Cinderella. One of the year's best.

History, Biography, Literature for Older Children

THIS YEAR I am not listing any junior novels. For one thing I don't often like them, for another there isn't much choice between 'em. And there are scores and scores of them published every year. Most young people of an age to read them know what they want anyway. But a hint to gift givers: the career books—fiction based on the idea of giving some notion of what a profession or trade is like—are going great guns. Dood, Mead has a whole series of them, other publishers have scattered items. Most of them are pretty well done, by people who know something about the subjects on which they write. And the young readers certainly seem to love 'em.

BY THE SHORES OF SILVER LAKE. By Laura Ingals Wilder. Harper's. $2.00. One of many historical numbers; also one of a series. The settling of the Dakota territory.

COLUMBUS SAILS. By C. Walter Hodges. Coward. $2.75. Fictionalized account of Christopher C. Good pictures.

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS. By John Bunyan. Illustrated by Robert Lawson. Stokes. $2.00. If you wish to subject your

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offspring to this classic, which is here presented in a very much shortened form, this is one way of doing it. The pictures have made it one of the season's most popular offerings.

SARANGA THE PYGMY. By Attilio Gatti. Illustrated by Kurt Weise. Scribner's. $2.00. Italy's No. 1 explorer writes a story based on his own observations. Good.

QUETZAL QUEST. By Victor Wolfgang Von Hagen and Quail Hawkins. Illustrated by Antonio Sotomayor. Harcourt. $2.00. Another explorer book, this time about Central America.

SEA-BIRD ISLAND. By Vera Andrus. Harcourt. $1.75. A nice regional story about the Gaspé country.

ESCAPE TO PERSIA. By Katherine Hull and Pamela Whitlock. Macmillan. $2.00. By the same young authors as wrote "Far Distant Oxus," one of the finest imaginative tales of recent seasons.

FRANZ SCHUBERT AND HIS MERRY FRIENDS. By Opal Wheeler and Sybil Deucher. Illustrated by Mary Greenwalt. Dutton. $2.00. A companion volume, same authors, illustrator, publisher, price: CURTAIN CALLS FOR JOSEPH HADYN AND SEBASTIAN BACH. The first is a biographical story with music; the second, musical plays for children.

LA SALLE, EXPLORER OF OUR MIDDLE EMPIRE. By Flora Warren Seymour. Illustrated by Edward Caswell. Appleton. $2.00. Title explains all.

BLAZING THE WAY WEST. By Bliss Isely. Illustrated with photographs of documentary material. Scribner's. $3.00. Not explicitly a juvenile, but suited to older boys and girls. The French in North America. A thrilling bit of history.

GREY DAWNS AND RED. By Marie Fischer. Sheed & Ward. $1.25. The life of the Blessed Theophane Venard (missioner to Indo-China). A tiny bit on the pious side, but not too, too.

TALL TIMBERS TALES. By Dell J. McCormick. Caxton. $2.00. More Paul Bunyan stuff. A little salty for the too young, but good for older boys.

TOM JEFFERSON. By Helen A. Monsell. Illustrated by Clotilde Embree Funk. Bobbs. $1.25. A difficult job to make this rather subtle character understandable, even to adults. But here's an attempt.

ON TO SUEZ. By Francis E. Benz. Illustrated by Victor J. Dowling. Dood, Mead. $2.00. De Lesseps and the canal, written with real spirit by a priest.

BOY WITH A PACK. By Stephen W. Meader. Harcourt. $2.00. 1837 trek to the Ohio country from Vermount.

THE VALE FAMILY. By Helen Hill and Violet Maxwell. Illustrated by Lois Maloy. A story of Washington at the time Grover Cleveland was President.

CALIFORNIA. By Grace Barton. Illustrated by Loren Barton. Macmillan. $2.00. State history for young readers.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN. Written and illustrated by Ingri and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire. Doubleday. $2.00. For quite young readers.

SHIPPACK SCHOOL. Written and illustrated by Marguerite de Angeli. Doubleday. $2.00. Mennonites in Pennsylvania about 1750.

JULIA ANN. By Rachel Varble. Illustrated by Dorothy Bayley. Doubleday. $2.00. There is a flood of books this year about Kentucky, almost all of them dealing with its early settlement. This is as good as any of them.

FLIVVER TO CAMBODIA. By Guy de Larigaudie. Putnam. $1.75. Two boys cross Asia in a second-hand Ford. A travel book based on a real trip. Illustrated with photos.

DERMOT OF THE BRIGHT WEAPONS. By Alan Buck. Illustrated by Richard Bennett. Oxford. $1.75. Another life of an Irish hero.

RUNNER OF THE MOUNTAIN TOPS. By Mabel L. Robinson. Illustrated. Random. $3.00. The life of Louis Agassiz.

THE MICROBE MAN. By Eleanor Doorly. Appleton. $1.50. A life of Pasteur.

ENCHANTING JENNY LIND. By Laura Benèt. Dodd, Mead. $2.50. The photos are interesting, the decorations awful, the text swell.

Informative and How-to-do-it Books

THIS is a class of books that is getting to be more important from year to year, and the books are getting better too. I have included here a certain number of miscellaneous things that fit vaguely in this category, not at all in any other.

HOW WE GET OUR FOOD. By Ethel K. Howard. Harcourt. $1.25. Photographs and text. Milk, meat, bread, fruit, vegetables, poultry.

HOMEMADE DOLLS IN FOREIGN DRESS. By Nina R. Jordan. Harcourt. $2.00. Practical instructions for making and dressing dolls of fifteen national types.

WOODCRAFT. By Bernard S. Mason. A. S. Barnes. $2.75. A terrific compendium—nearly 600 pages—that just about cleans up the subject. Highly recommended for boys.

WEE MODERNS. By Lillian Eichler Watson. Dorrance. $1.00. The subtitle is "A book about manners for little ladies and gentlemen." Draw your own conclusions. And yet not as bad as that implies.

THE BOYS' BOOK OF INSECTS. By Edwin Way Teale. Dutton. $2.00. Good.

TABLE-GAMES: HOW TO MAKE AND HOW TO PLAY THEM. By Ray J. Marran. A. S. Barnes. $1.50. Practical dope on the subject. Not as handsome inside as the jacket indicates, but adequate for the purpose.

DOROTHY GORDON'S TREASURE BAG OF GAME SONGS. Illustrated by Veronica Reed. Dutton. $1.50. A little horrid to think of play being so unspontaneous, but then. . . .

MAGIC STRINGS. By Remo Buffano. Illustrated by Boris Artzybasheff. Macmillan. $1.50. Ten marionette plays and how to put them on.

GUIDEPOSTS OF THE SEA. By Irving Conklin. Macmillan. $2.00. All about the lighthouse service by a lighthouse keeper. Illustrated with photographs.

PETS ARE FUN. By Dorothea Park. Illustrated by Marguerite Davis. Houghton. $1.00. How to take care of them, in story form.

LET'S GO OUTDOORS. By Harriet E. Huntington. Doubleday. $2.00. Nature for younger children (up to 9) illustrated with swell photographs.

SHIPS AND MEN. By John J. Floherty. Doubleday. $2.00. All about the U. S. Merchant Marine and ships in general. Illustrated with photographs.

START EARLY. By Ian Fenwick. Oxford. $.75. A few hints on skiing with amusing illustrations by the author.

THE TOP OF THE WORLD. By Alice Gall and Fleming Crew. Pictures by Nils Hogner. Oxford. $1.50. All about Greenland.

METROPOLIS: A STUDY OF NEW YORK. By Mary Field Parton. Longmans. $2.00. A young peoples' guide to the big city.

FORESTRY AND LUMBERING. By Josephine Perry and Celeste Slauson. Longmans. $1.50. Just that.

OUR SMALL NATIVE ANIMALS: THEIR HABITS AND CARE. By Robert Snedigar. Random. $2.50. The title tells all. Good.

TWO SAILORS AND THEIR VOYAGE AROUND CAPE HORN. By Warwick M. Tompkins. Viking. $2.50. As nice a boat and sailing book as has come in many a long year. Illustrated largely with photographs.

Two Farm Books

THIS YEAR has seen the production of quite a little material on rural life for young readers. It seems a good thing, so I have made up a small class of such.

ON THE FARM. By W. W. Robinson. Illustrated by Irene Robinson. Macmillan. $2.00. For younger readers and lookers on. The animals are depicted very big, which will disturb some.

FIVE BUSHEL FARM. By Elizabeth Coatsworth. Illustrations by Helen Sewell. Macmillan. $2.00. An historical story of colonial days by a charming writer.

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Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

I HAVE BEEN reading a book by a former German soldier which contains much striking information concerning the situation of religion in Naziland and its prospects. Far more vividly than many a more learned treatise might do, this simple yet profound study of certain elements of Christianity as it really was practiced by the writer, written by a layman who after his army career was over became an engineer and then (wonder of wonders!) a successful banker and business organizer, illustrates how deeply implanted the roots of the Catholic Church are in the soil—or rather, the soul— of Germany. The facile success which the latest of many terrible attacks upon the Church and all it stands for in human life has achieved in Germany and Austria and Bohemia and Poland under the Nazi régime has done terrible damage to the visible works of religion; its organization, its educational system, its cultural societies; yet there is good reason to believe that the spiritual foundations of the Church in Germany and in Europe generally and indeed throughout the world, its innermost essence, which is what the book in question deals with, are more powerful and enduring than all the might of the Nazi state.

The book is called "The Mystic Life of Graces," and was published a few years ago in an authorised translation by the Reverend W. J. Anderson from the third German edition published by the Jaegen Society, its author being Hieronymus Jaegen. The Jaegen Society was organized in Treves soon after the death of the author in 1919, and under Bishop Bornewasser of the Treves diocese it was formally approved in 1931. In addition to carrying on a thorough study of the writings of Hieronymus Jaegen, the members of the society, which was presided over by a Jesuit priest, Father Charles Sudbrack, and a layman, Paul Sterath, M. D., began the preparation for the process of Jaegen's beatification, the first steps of which have been made at Rome, where Monsignor Arthur Wynen of the Rota is the postulator of the cause. All the members of the society, moreover, were men and women living in the world, pledged not only to take part in Catholic Action, "as apostles of Jesus Christ, in absolute loyalty to the Holy See and to the episcopate," but also pledged—and I think it is this fact which gives the mark of unique originality to this society, for I have never heard of any other group similarly pledged—"to aim at Christian perfection." What that meant in their case is made quite evident to the readers of the book I am discussing, for it was nothing other than the effort—which in Jaegen's case apparently was supremely successful—to reach the very highest attainable heights of mystical sanctity, conscious union with God in this life, without drawing from lay obligations and duties and interests, and simultaneously engaging in the exterior works of Catholic Action.

In his life, too, it seems he was also a leader of Catholic Action in his native district, being connected with many religious organizations, sometimes as their director and always in close relations to official authority, yet with much personal initiative. But it was not known even to his closest lay associates during his life how intensely, and at what great heights he was living his interior, mystical life. Only a few ecclesiastics, made aware of his secret through being at one time or another his spiritual directors, knew the complete story of his amazing career. As one of them afterwards testified, this former soldier and reserve officer, engineer, merchant, banker and even politician (he was for many years a deputy to the Prussian Landtag), "whose exterior life was spent in business offices and in Parliament, in hotels and among gatherings of his friends, everywhere played his part as reason and faith demanded, and everywhere, too, found God, and lived in the most intimate mystical union with Him. What was attained by Saint Teresa of Jesus, the reorganizer of the Carmelite congregation, in a cell in a cloister which separated her from the world, has been found by this friend of God in positions which are full of the call of the world; we refer to the summit of the mystical life, the mystical union with God, as this small book demonstrates."

The phrase used in the above quotation, referring to Jaegen as the friend of God, will recall to readers of the literature of mysticism that marvelous outpouring of Christian mysticism in Germany and the adjacent Low Countries centuries ago, which went by the name of the "Friends of God in the Oberland," with which many great Catholic writers were associated and out of which so great a classic of ascetic-mysticism as the "Imitation of Christ" proceeded. Perhaps the Jaegen Society and related movements in modern Germany are signs of a new birth of this ancient spirit of mysticism in Germany, a mysticism which never remained aloof from the organizational and active life of the Church and the life of society in general but permeated the latter with the deep currents of the inner life.

My space will not suffice even to sketch the very wonderful story told so briefly and simply by Hieronymus Jaegen, but I most sincerely recommend it to all readers interested in the rather neglected subject of practical mysticism. It will give them new and justifiable hope for the future of the people now dominated by a really alien spirit of state and racial paganism, but whose deepest allegiance is to the spirit of Christ and His Church. We have heard much about Hitler and Goebbels, and the fantastic philosophers and false mystics from which the Nazi creed proceeded; it would be well for us all to remember the men, and among greater luminaries this banker-politician of Treves, who represent the philosophy of Christian truth and the mysticism of the true Christian life, who are the true spokesmen of the German people and who, because they are really Christian, must be drawn into fellowship with their kind throughout the world. Perhaps, too, we may some day have our own counterpart of his society, men and women of the world who live also in the eternal world of light and love which was Jaegen's real home but which did not render him an alien to the world of this life and all its cares and concerns, for to him, apparently, it was truly transfigured.

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The Stage & Screen

Thunder Rock

ROBERT ARDREY is still a playwright of promise. Unfortunately, however, he has been this in all of his plays. He has imagination, he can write felicitously, he has a sense of middle and lower class character, he has moments of true dramatic inspiration, and yet he never quite comes off. He does not in "Thunder Rock," despite an interesting first act. Perhaps here he has taken a subject too big for him. He wants to preach the doctrine that we must never give up, and to give it point he introduces into a lonely lighthouse both live people and ghosts. With the help of the ghosts and a wind-machine he gets to work, but aside from the tense first act and occasional moments later, the wind from the wind-machine gets into the words and the fable itself. Symbolism can be used in the theatre only by a supreme master, and Mr. Ardrey is not that. And yet he is an interesting dramatist—he still is. If only he could see a play as a whole before he sets about to write it; if only he could resolve the problems he creates. The Group Theatre has given his "Thunder Rock" an admirable production. Maxim Gorelik's setting is atmospheric, and most of the acting good, especially that of Myron McCormick as the aviator killed in China and that of Morris Carnovsky and Roman Bohnen. Let us wish Mr. Ardrey and the Group better luck next time. (*At the Mansfield Theatre.*)

Very Warm for May

A NEW Jerome Kern-Oscar Hammerstein II operetta ought to be an event, for it is eight years since they last collaborated on a Broadway musical. "Very Warm for May" is no "Show Boat" or "Music in the Air," but despite the weakness of its book, Mr. Kern's music is Mr. Kern at very nearly his best. "In the Heart of the Dark," "All the Things You Are" and "Heaven in Your Arms" are charming tunes charmingly sung. They will be heard, and very soon, on every radio. The cast too is excellently chosen. There are handsome Jack Whiting, winsome Grace McDonald, beautiful Frances Mercer, who can also sing well enough, Eve Arden who can make things sound funny even when they are not, as they are not in "Very Warm for May," Hiram Sherman, who knows the way comedy should be played, Donald Brian, with memories from the past and a lot of clever dancers. Also there is sumptuous scenery and beautiful costumes by Vincente Minnelli. If only the book had been equal to the rest. But unfortunately it is continually getting in the way. It is all about a barn theatre, and the idea seems to be that a show is better when put on by a Broadway producer. That is I think that was it. But it wasn't very clear and it wasn't very funny. But there were beautiful scenes and admirable singing and expert dancing. These with Mr. Kern's music ought to make the production a popular success. And that there is a marked lack of vulgarity will certainly be in its favor. Indeed exception could be taken to only one scene, and that is a record for modern Broadway musicals. (*At the Alvin Theatre.*)

GRENVILLE VERNON.

"Proper Study of Mankind Is Man"

YOU WONDER when you see "We Are Not Alone" that such a lovable, kindly, thoughtful doctor as is portrayed by Paul Muni ever happened to marry that severe, inconsiderate disciplinarian played by Flora Robson. You wonder many things about the film—how did James Hilton, on whose novel it is based, allow himself to be won over so completely to Thomas Hardy's blind irony of chance; what is this picture driving at with its gloomy foreboding interspersed with only occasional glimpses of sunshine and happiness? But regardless of the depressing story with its dubious point, there is no doubt about the film's having a first-rate production. Edmund Goulding's expert direction is seen again and again in angle shots, fine acting, close tie-up in music, sets and story. This long, gripping picture concentrates on sorrow and illness—the wife's migraines, the child's obsessions with fear and death, the persecution of the young Austrian (simply and effectively played by Jane Bryan), the hateful things that decent, average people do when they become a mob (this is 1914 England), the slow, interesting trial scene in which circumstantial evidence is twisted to torture the doctor and the foreigner and lead to their death and release. If "We Are Not Alone" has any message, it is for understanding in man's dealings with man.

George Eliot stated some interesting ideas on kindliness and human dignity in "The Mill on the Floss"; but whatever ideas she had were lost in the filming of her fine novel. John Drinkwater's mediocre script, overemphasizing plot, follows the original closely until the ending when for some inexplicable reason it chooses to let Maggie and Philip Wakem drown in the flood instead of Maggie and Tom as in Eliot's well-planned conclusion. The principals, including Geraldine Fitzgerald and Frank Lawton, turn in pale performances; somehow Director Tim Whelan was never able to convince the rest of the cast that they were acting before a camera and not on the stage. Movier-goers who have not read the book will get false impressions.

I am sorry to report that Groucho, Harpo and Chico are not at their best in "At the Circus." The script is weak and the support they get from their playmates is almost nil. Because I am so fond of the Marx Brothers, even when they are using old and below standard stuff, I found myself laughing and having a good time anyway.

Director George Amy's peppy number about "Kid Nightingale," who wants to sing but is persuaded to be a fighter by Walter Catlett, is no serious "Golden Boy," rather a burlesque with flashy lines, puns and riotous laughs caused by our hero as he warbles "Listen to the Mockingbird" after each kayo. Handsome, well-built John Payne is the boy who sings, fights and makes money on swooning feminine fans. His manager admits that he has "good looks, personality and rosy cheeks." John certainly has items one and three. PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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Books of the Week

The Catholic Worker

House of Hospitality, by Dorothy Day. New York: Sheed and Ward. $2.50.

"HOUSE OF HOSPITALITY" is important because the Catholic Worker effort is important. The book is a running record of the good that has come out of Charles and Mott Streets. But it is important in its own right, too. It is a flawlessly written human document of compelling interest.

Four things emerge from reading the book: the author's love of the poor; her struggle to get on with herself; her delicate response to the beauties around her; the unforgettable picture of the lower East Side and of the people, in long succession, who have come to the House.

The movement has gone a long way since she knelt at the National Shrine in Washington on Immaculate Conception Day, 1932, praying that she might be given the opportunity to work for the poor as a Catholic. On her return to New York she found Peter Maurin at her sister's house, prepared to show her the way. Since that time, a labor paper, discussion groups, a house of hospitality, a farming commune—the four-point program of Maurin—have been struck real. The paper goes to over a hundred thousand monthly. Discussion runs on continually at the House and wherever an articulate Catholic Worker is. Not only is there a house of hospitality in New York, but there are twenty-three others and some cells clear to the West Coast, affording accommodations from a few to over a hundred, feeding daily in number about five thousand. On this score Maryhouse of the Cathedral parish in Chicago is a recent development—the parish house of hospitality. Maryhouse is only for women, but it is on the near North Side, just off the Elevated on Wells Street, and is continually crowded to capacity.

Then there has been the return to the land in the farming commune at Easton, Pennsylvania. Pius XII scores the flight from the land in his encyclical to the United States. What has been tried repeatedly, from the Brook Farm experiment onward, has finally succeeded at Easton. The Catholic Worker group has what the experimenters of the past never had, strong religious ties to knit them together, to tide over the difficulties, and a unified Catholic social philosophy—though the beneficiaries of the farm are by no means all Catholic.

The secret of the work in the House of Hospitality is voluntary poverty. Maurin insisted upon it from the start, but as Dorothy Day points out, working among the poor would quite naturally have dictated it. Voluntary poverty has made the work realistic, has had tremendous spiritual purifying power, has engendered sympathy for the involuntary poor and has won others by its very honesty.

More than poverty was the love which gave birth to it. She quotes Father Zossima in "The Brothers Karamazov" to say what it costs: "Love in action is a harsh and dreadful thing compared to love in dreams." When it descends to practicalities, in a tenement house in a tenement district—to cleaning bug-ridden beds and toilets, to lack of privacy, to a hundred afflicting odors, affronting the most painful of our senses, love is a harsh thing indeed.

Dorothy Day fears the book is too much a record of her spiritual conflicts and meditations. But this in the deepest sense gives the book its power and in a literary sense makes it the humanly moving account that it is. It shows clearly what the life demands; how much it depends upon complete trust in Providence—rare quality today; how an all-embracing charity is a growth, not a sudden resolve; what heights and depths a soul in sincere struggle will experience. An occasional reader might be critical of her forthrightness. Most will feel that they can hardly be sufficiently grateful for the candor with which she has written. It would be impossible otherwise to guess what the price and the course of such a life are.

There is an exceptional sensitivity to beauty in Dorothy Day and an equally exceptional ability to write of it. Amid the distracting concerns of the House, she has a keen eye for the fugitive loveliness to be glimpsed in lower Manhattan. All through the book there is a fresh, delightful account of what she sees, particularly in the countryside. A medical student, who has unsual literary talent himself, once told me that when he wanted to read good writing he turned to what Dorothy Day writes for the *Catholic Worker*. The book discloses anew the artlessness, the amazing literary flexibility, the grave yet gentle quality peculiarly hers, which have distinguished each issue of the *Worker*.

Finally there are the unforgettable East Side scenes, the unforgettable people who crowd the book. The happy Italian home life, even in a poor district; the Salesian Church; the unquestioning charity of St. Zita's home; the festa for the Assumption; the bleak tenements; the pervading poverty; the heartless evictions; "the collectivization of misery," the Municipal Lodging House; the sun rising in the early morning mists at the foot of Fourteenth Street; the breeze off the bay down at the Battery; the Leviathan firing up for her last journey. And the people: the old janitress, ashamed to ply by daylight her trade of picking rags from ashcans; mad Sarah Harding shouting from a window of an adjacent apartment in the dead of night; talkative Margaret the Lithuanian, out of work, finding ten dollars in the street; Haig who provided opposition for any controversy; Mr. Minas with his fear of bugs and his Oriental poetry; Joe Bennett who did not want to die and had to; the clients at the Welfare station; the seamen on strike.

The book is an answer to the critics who say that the movement has too largely concerned itself with the personalist viewpoint and not enough with the interests of labor and the duties of government. As for government action, Miss Day never minimizes the stern insistence that states protect the weak, among whom are a large mass of wage-earners. But she insists government is not the cure-all that many are too inclined to think it is. No legislation yet devised, but attempts are made to circumvent it—what with appeals to the courts, injunctions, legal evasions, downright disregard of the statute, where that is possible with impunity. The Catholic Worker cannot be blamed for putting the lesser emphasis on government action, when even in this democratic country a pitiable struggle is required to keep necessary legislation like the National Labor Relations Act on the books.

As for interest in organized labor, this movement is a Catholic *worker* movement. It has effected an utterly necessary alliance of works of mercy and of organizing labor. It has made for a well-rounded effort. The whole movement has a distinct encyclical emphasis, the lack of which in other efforts sometimes causes a decided feeling of uneasiness. Three things run like a thread through the narrative: her sharp interest in working conditions and the plight of the worker; the practicality of her interest—

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actually being on the picket line, actually feeding the strikers; her keen sense of the futility of class-struggle, with its hate, which is so dear to the mentality of communism.

Of particular interest to Chicagoans is the story of the rioting at the Republic Steel Company plant. Her eye-witness account of this trouble in the city's back-yard makes more amazing the misunderstanding with which the strikers have been treated. It took the LaFollette Civil Liberties Committee in Washington, this book out of New York, and a very recent decision of the Third Circuit Court of Appeals in Pennsylvania to sketch the necessary background for one of the most stupid incidents in labor history.

In reading the book, the old wonder returns why we are so inclined to believe our police incapable of brutality and deficient leadership because the rank and file are Catholics; why abundance often begets parsimony with underlings; why the appeal of a panhandler on the street provokes a sudden and stern principle not to abet professional beggary; why an interest in workers is rebuffed by the well-worn reminder that "you never had to meet a pay-roll"; why people must misunderstand so thoroughly, invoking unrestrained generalizations, before arriving at the sympathetic understanding of others' efforts, which with a little reflection would have been possible at the outset.

The Catholic Worker with its vocation to voluntary poverty would be the last to claim that it has the complete answer. That can only come from the fusion of many efforts. One of these is still almost completely lacking in this country. This is the forging of an apostolate among the young workers, in the JOC sense of the term. However much we may have to modify the Belgian technique, the substantial effort must be made. Incidentally we might note that in creating apostles the Catholic Worker has reached the heights. Who will deny that giving up home and espousing poverty and feeding, indoctrinating the poor is an apostolate? "The apostles of the workers must be the workers"; the apostles of the poor must be the poor.

What sharpens this point is that the book is not a record of a person who by instinct and background was one of the poor, but of a person who by conviction and deliberate choice went to the poor and became one of them.

This book is good literature. It is good adventure reading. It is a good diagnosis of the times. It is a good and, therefore, dismaying picture of how the other half of the Mystical Body lives. It is a good practical commentary on social doctrine. It is a good labor book. It is good spiritual reading. Some years ago a priest, rather inclined to be critical, said after hearing Dorothy Day speak, "All I can say is that I ought to kneel and kiss the hem of her garment." A good guess is that those who read the book will feel the same way. REYNOLD HILLENBRAND.

ART

Last Lectures, by Roger Fry; Introduction by Sir Kenneth Clark. Cambridge: at the University Press. New York: the Macmillan Company. $5.00.

THE LATE Roger Fry made his reputation as a champion of "pure" art. Ruskin had preached the inviolable union of art and morality. Fry presented the contradictory theory that the esthetic attitude is exactly the reverse of the moral or practical. He developed the esthetic of an art depending for its effect solely on the relations of forms and colors, irrespective of what those

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forms or colors might represent. "The crucial fact which appears to me to arise . . . is that in all cases our reaction to works of art is a reaction to a relation and not to sensations, or objects, or persons, or events." ("Transformations," 1926).

Such a position, however open to attack (cf. I. A. Richards "The Principles of Literary Criticism"), has at least this salutary effect: it compels the observer to strike through the ephemeral content of a work of art—its literary and descriptive associations—to the basic formal and plastic relations. These are not and cannot be (the pure spectator is an even more impossible conception than the pure artist) the whole story; but surely there is more value in a critic who is able to demonstrate to us the fundamental plastic means of a work of art than in one who merely discusses its subject or fixes its date.

In 1933 Fry began a series of lectures at Cambridge University which undertook to apply his esthetic to the visual art of the whole world, in roughly chronological sequence, from Egypt to the present day. He had arrived at the period of Hellenistic Art when his death cut short the series. "Last Lectures," with a valuable introduction by the well-known Leonardo scholar, Sir Kenneth Clark, contains the lectures already completed, with nearly 350 illustrations from Fry's slides.

It was necessary to limit such an ambitious undertaking. "I propose to narrow down our enquiry by isolating particular qualities in works of art and comparing them with one another solely in regard to one or two qualities at a time." These qualities are vitality and sensibility. Both are broad, vague terms. Sensibility might be roughly defined, in Fry's sense, as the personal touch of the artist—the difference between a ruled and a drawn line, between a geometric and a dynamic curve. Vitality is the inner life of the art-object.

These two qualities Fry finds at their minimum in the formal, over-finished, conceptual art of the Egyptians. The Greeks, too, for all their reputation, seem to him over-intellectualized, with little feeling of life, little aptitude for broad plastic continuity and coherence. Indian and Cretan and much near-eastern art go to the opposite extreme, losing unity and power through an excess of sensibility and plastic facility—a sort of undisciplined expressionism. The African Negroes, the pre-Columbian Americans, and the early Chinese fit Fry's conditions best. Forms broadly imagined and strongly expressed, abstracted from photographic description without degenerating into conceptual geometry; expressing through the free sensibility and deep intuition of the artist the vital essence of his subject.

One may challenge Roger Fry's enthusiasms, as many have challenged his esthetic—which, parenthetically, becomes so much less pure, so much more human when we observe it in practice. But his exploration of the great art periods of the past is a stimulating experience. Our heritages from these periods have often been catalogued, often described. Fry tries to carry us one step further, to help us to *see* them.

DAVID BURNHAM.

FICTION

Moment in Peking, by Lin Yutang. New York: The John Day Company. $3.00.

READERS who know Lin Yutang's "My Country and My People" will expect to find in his novel searching, sympathetic analysis of modern China; and those who know "The Importance of Living" will look for the philosophic leaven too often lacking in the fiction that aspires to be social document. For both groups of readers, and for new ones too, "Moment in Peking" holds much.

Probably the most immediately striking of its claims to distinction is the fact that this first novel of modern China by a Chinese has been written in English, as though linguistic detachment could sharpen the excellent perspective which Lin Yutang achieves throughout the crowded, dramatic book. As an English novel, it has close affinity with the eighteenth century novel of manners; and its early chapters are as packed as Nora Weln's "House of Exile" with fascinating intricacies of dress, ceremony, etiquette and family relationships. Yet it is far more than a study of the domestic details of a vanishing society, historically important as is its evidence about the life of officials, scholars and wealthy merchants through the last years of imperial Peking and the subsequent upheavals.

Using a few families bound by marriage, Lin Yutang, with fine imaginative reach, succeeds in creating the vast panorama between two periods of exodus—that caused by the Boxer uprising and the western thrust of flight from the Japanese in our day. That drama has, of course, encompassed far more than political revolution. Since its acts have altered women's life more than men's, there is justice in the author's choosing Mulan, even in childhood a relatively emancipated girl, as his pivotal character and her sister, Mochow, as the figure of next importance. Their kinsmen, friends and husbands are significant, of course, but the book is Mulan's. And in her intelligence, wit, beauty and charm, she makes a notable heroine. No reader who must skip some of the minor stories to continue hers will merit severe rebuke. In a sense she concentrates the spirit of the new China, for hers is the story of the twentieth century between the time when she is a lost child in a period of turmoil and when she is gathering the waifs of a still more pitiful flight. At the end, she has grown children, and she has known great satisfaction and great pain; yet the almost forty years have passed as a river flowing, "for in old Peking, the moment and eternity are one."

OLIVE B. WHITE.

Ask the Dust, by John Fante. New York: Stackpole Sons. $2.00.

THIS IS a strange novel, one which is most emphatically *not* recommended for reading by the young, or even by the old who dislike sordid pictures of immorality. Let no reader write in indignation that his or her tender feelings or moral sentiments have been violated because he or she has read "Ask the Dust" as a result of this review. At the very outset I give this emphatic warning, for, I repeat, here is not a pretty tale. Yet in many ways it is quite an extraordinary piece of work, and a very Catholic piece of work at that. We recognize in all the activities of the hero the normal weaknesses, the occasional normal strength by which man is distinguished from both beast and angel. Particularly human is the hero's revulsion to sin, his realization that when he fulfils—or sets about to fulfil—a normal human desire forbidden in the moral code, the fulfilment turns to ashes. Not that this realization acts as a deterrent. In real life it never does, nor does it in this novel.

There is one very beautiful passage in the book which must particularly appeal to a Catholic reader—the passage in which the hero ruminates on what it is to "lose" the Faith, and realizes that the Faith really is not lost, but merely hidden for a time, like the reality of the ocean to a man whose childhood was passed on its shores but who has not for many years seen sea or shore. Here is one of

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the most profound analyses I have ever read of that peculiar Latin trait, whereby men are baptized, married, buried in Church, but don't otherwise practice their religion.

"Ask the Dust" would not only offend those who are —consciously or unconsciously—tinged with Jansenism. It will certainly offend the Chamber of Commerce of Southern California, for it gives about as squalid a picture of life in those supposedly idyllic parts as one could well imagine. HARRY LORIN BINSSE.

MISCELLANEOUS

Master Builders: A Typology of the Spirit, by Stefan Zweig. Translated from the German by Eden and Cedar Paul. New York: The Viking Press. $3.75.

HERR ZWEIG explains it is a critique of the creative will. Part I, "Great Masters," published some twenty-five years ago, was a study of Balzac, Dickens and Dostoeffsky as the three greatest novelists of the nineteenth century. The choice now seems completely nineteenth century itself, nor are the chapters on Dickens or Balzac particularly illuminating. It cannot be denied that Balzac introduced ambition instead of love into the romantic novel nor that Dickens exactly expressed the bourgeois demand for comfort and home life that was England's general ideal after the Napoleonic tension but, while Zweig calls attention to British objectivity, he declares that nationalism colors not only the English mentality but their artistic impulse and that therefor "the Englishman is far more English than the German is German." For Dostoeffsky, Zweig's enthusiasm is exalted and he can appraise sympathetically what he terms a "spiritualized love of debauchery." Life from the dirt of the gutter to the mountain peak was Dostoeffsky's whole passion. Suffering was to be cherished as a window to wisdom; the human soul was best understood by him in its agonies. But if Dostoeffsky agonized himself to bring about a new kingdom of God upon earth, it was with the conviction that "every human being must first become a Russian."

No such concrete solution for the problem of life was found by the protagonists in Part II, "The Struggle with the Daimon." Three Germans are chosen to typify the conquest of the artist by elemental forces. Continually hounded by this "daimon"—the inexorable spirit of unrest, homeless, wifeless, friendless—Kleist, the erotic playwright, succumbed in the suicide pact that had haunted him for years while both Holderlin, the frustrated epic poet and Nietzsche, the philosopher, died quite mad. "Thus Spake Zarathrusthra," Zweig considers the greatest book by the greatest mind of the epoch. To strip the Truth, naked to men's eyes was the frenzied struggle of a brain anchored to one of the most wretched of human bodies. To Nietzsche, half blind, wracked with headaches, nausea cramps and fever, God was just another sham. The invalid defied a superman.

In dramatic contrast to these unhappy wayfarers towards the infinite, Casanova, who dwelt so voluptuously in the present, introduces Part III, "Adepts in Self Portraiture." Here Casanova, Stendhal and Tolstoy express three grades of self study on the planes of the physical, the mental and the spiritual. To tear the covers from the soul has often been the function of sanctity but an intellectual arrogance prevented Tolstoy—whose ideal was meekness—from accepting any spiritual or theological guidance and death overtook him before he could square his life with his convictions. His conversion is most tragically described as having "glimpsed the Nothingness

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behind things. . . . What do we gain," asks Zweig, "by calling this abyss, this open 'maw' God? What do we gain by pasting leaves from the Bible over the fissure?" If immortality is to be measured by work and strength, then morality is nothing, intensity is all. On the 858th page of this 900-page trilogy, Tolstoy and Dostoeffsky are denounced as clinging to the Christian Cross and so spreading a cloud athwart the Russian world at the very time when Nietzsche's clarifying lightnings are rending to tatters the old anxieties about Heaven and when Nietzsche has bestowed upon Europeans the gift of faith in their own power and freedom."

As we have been enjoying that gift since 1914, Zweig's judgment seems sounder when he classifies Casanova as a low grade sinner. Casanova's sins were purely of the flesh, nor did his ego demand the seduction of the innocent like Stendhal, but Zweig, whose facility of expression often passes for scholarship, is definitely dangerous to the simple—an open enemy to God and democracy. The book presuppose an intimate knowledge of the authors reviewed; the industrious Pauls merit much praise for their translation. EUPHEMIA VAN RENSSELAER WYATT.

The Dutch Country, by Cornelius Weygandt. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company. $4.00.

IF YOU ARE a fan either for the Pennsylvania Dutch or for Cornelius Weygandt this is your book, even though it is somewhat repetitious and reminiscent of the same author's "The Red Hills." It definitely is not my book. Partly because I stomach Weygandt's writing only with the greatest difficulty, but mainly because I am getting a little tired of the Pennsylvania Dutch cult and of the false impression its high priests are creating outside this area of southeastern Pennsylvania.

It may be my misfortune that I have lived near or amongst Pennsylvania Dutch (I wish they could agree amongst themselves to make it either "Dutch" or "German" and stick to one: the outlander always risks offending by a wrong choice of epithets) all my life. It is my considered opinion they are much like any other large group of people, and maybe a little more so, in that for every fine citizen and ornament of civilization there is at least one—perhaps two—dirty, ignorant, cruel, vicious, superstitious and envious. The first five qualities might crop up anywhere; it is in enviousness that the Pennsylvania Dutch —good and bad alike—excel.

However it is not this reverse side of the shield I have in mind when I speak of the false impression created by the Weygandts *et al.* This false impression is that outside the restricted limits of the city of Philadelphia our countryside is solid Dutch. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Thus in the last piece in this book Weygandt talks about Downingtown and West Chester as though they were distinctively Dutch village. Welch is what they are, if they are anything but completely American. A good many so-called Pennsylvania Dutch are not Dutch or German at all. Of two families with which I am acquainted, the Miesses of Lancaster are Lotharingian and the Kloses of Bethlehem are French Huguenot via Holland—both names would be spelled with a final e-acute if American type-faces customarily carried them. Dr. Weygandt is careful to exclude from his works such names as DePrefontaine, as typically Pennsylvania Dutch as the French Revolution refugees who established it here in old Pigeontown.

As an instance of how much the way things look depends on where you sit, consider my own case. If I know the Philadelphia mind as reflected by such as Dr. Weygandt—and I bet I do—I myself hardly rate as a native Philadelphian, even though I was born here, because my mother was a Vermont Yankee and my father a South Jerseyman. Yet Weygandt classifies my friend the late Jacob Medinger, whose father was born and learned the pottery trade in Wittenberg, as the last of the Pennsylvania Dutch potters simply because father and son continued to turn out the type of stuff that had established Limerick Pottery as a going concern before they went to work in it. Which is as to say if you, dear reader, eat scrapple with zest—that makes you forty pinochle, too. HENRY TETLOW.

My Old Man, by Damon Runyan. New York: Stackpole Sons. $2.50.

DAMON RUNYAN'S collection of minute essays is not intended for the devoted follower of the Montaigne tradition; nor will it arouse the patient admirer of syllogistic cadence. Neither is this a handbook for the unenlightened, for the paradoxical musings of this mythical parent are those which must come to everyone, sooner or later. Happily, "My Old Man" is not the professional whittler who, before becoming epigrammatic, takes a long stage pause by twisting his head and ejecting tobacco juice: Mr. Runyan's father warns us about that. He is the quiet, modest thinker who hasn't been asked his opinion until now. And he speaks humorously, broadly—from "On Matrimony" to "On Pensions."

For those who are acquainted with the author's refreshingly insane short stories this book will be a downright disappointment. Only once does the Runyan flavor escape in, not surprisingly, a story about a gambler and a shady miss disguised as "On Lady Sports." And while a comparison with Clarence Day's masterpiece might be unfair, we must admit that "My Old Man" lacks individuality, richness: this father appears to be a composite in monochrome. But we should recall that these "philosophical" bits were written as a series of syndicated columns for a wide audience—too wide an audience.

STEPHEN BALDANZA.

WAR

Germany Rampant, by Ernest Hambloch. A Study in Economic Militarism. New York: Carrick and Evans, Inc. $2.50.

MR. HAMBLOCH shows a sincere hatred for everything German on almost every page of this book. He despises the Catholic Church. He thinks that Franco revolted "for the grandees of Spain." He has no use for Austria. He loathes Chamberlain. He has the usual cliché: Nazism is what the orthodox credulous Marxist calls "Fascism," a wicked device of the capitalists to enslave labor—and Hitler is their puppet.

Mr. Hamblock knows German history, literature and philosophy well, so well that he can misuse it to bolster up his prejudices and let them look like serious arguments—to the outsider. To him every German is a little Hitler, from Arminius (9 B.C.), to Hitler (1939 A.D.), Martin Luther being one of the worst. His God was not the "Father," but the "strong castle" of his famous hymn, which by the way is only a translation of Psalm 17, which of course extends the eternal Hitler's ancestry back to 900 B.C. and King David.

Even the German language is bad, although not too bad to make quite a show of one's knowledge of it by filling one's English text with dozens of untranslated words.

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Sometimes Mr. Hambloch slips into Yiddish instead of German, e.g., when he translates "German" into "Deutschlander" instead of "Deutscher." If Germany has developed the ugly growth of methodical and idiotic anti-Semitism, we see as a reaction here a new racialism: Jewish anti-Germanism.

Léon Blum in his controversy with Henri de Kérillis last August warned us not to become anti-Nazis and not to let ourselves stoop to their methods. Two famous Germans, Konrad Heiden and Leopold Schwarzshild, both exiles, have discussed the same question: is Hitler the typical German, of the species *Germanus vulgaris,* or is he what the French have called *la victoire des boches sur les Allemands?* As long as there are Cardinals Faulhaber, Dr. Bruenings, Rauschnings, Schuschniggs, Niemoellers and millions of men and women suffering agonies under a régime of terror because they refuse to deal with gangsterism by equivalent methods, I think one should be careful to pass general judgment on a whole nation. To prove Mr. Hambloch's thesis needs more than temperamental outbursts, flippant generalizations, compilations of one sided quotations — even if it be ten full pages of the Kaiser's *scribae.* I am a German, but I have no submissive tendencies, which I ought to have according to our author.

Would Mr. Hambloch accept a Nazi book on the eternal Englishman in which Henry VIII's treachery and cruelty were called typically English, along with Elizabeth's cold brutality, Francis Drake's, Oliver Cromwell's and the East India Company's deeds, the expropriation of England's peasantry, her slave trade and what not? Would he as an Englishman of Jewish ancestry like something which called all the misdeeds ever done by Jews typical?

This is an unpleasant book, because its attitude is "Nazi" and its cliché is that of *parlor pink vulgaris.* We have enough of that by now. H. A. REINHOLD.

The Deadly Parallel, by C. Hartley Grattan. New York: Stackpole Sons. $2.00.

WE ARE being asked, at the moment, to forget all the tragic lessons of the last war, to torpedo neutrality and again to bring all our resources to the service of those high moral ideals to which we give allegiance. It is particularly this sort of starry-eyed phoney idealism—an idealism corrupted at the heart by its appeal to force—that Mr. Grattan characterizes as a menace to American democracy.

By one means or another a vast amount of effort is being expended to involve us in the current war in Europe. All the propaganda rackets of the first World War are being rapidly mobilized because Americans, now as always, are the world's greatest suckers for British soft-soap. Hitler has been substituted for the Kaiser, Nazi for Hun. Once again Britain and France, where a blackout of democracy has already occurred, are supposed to be serving as buffer states against the menace of the Beast to the United States.

Mr. Grattan believes that Americans should stay at home and mind their own business. It is his firm conviction that war today is a confession of bankruptcy—that it cannot lead to a better world, but only to senseless destruction and social chaos. If Americans want a better world, they must build it in America—not in Europe. Mr. Grattan concludes his timely and important comparison of the tactics of the Holy War crusaders, yesterday and today, with a practical program for genuine American neutrality. JOHN J. O'CONNOR.

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EGGS AND ORANGES

by Doris Kirkpatrick

To follow up this week's analysis of political developments in Germany, we present an eye-witness account of living conditions there during recent months. In a land where store windows are piled high with eggs and oranges and everything to eat, it is hard to realize what life would be if such essentials were virtually unobtainable. A truly moving story.

NATURE AT THE HEARTHSIDE

by Frederic Thompson

With an eye to Christmas Mr. Thompson gives a highly personal account of his efforts to survey the field of nature books for readers of The Commonweal. He deals at length with a dozen or more of the year's most fascinating attempts to write about snakes, shells, birds and grasses. A survey that is in itself a highly amusing adventure.

ACCENT ON PEACE

by Katherine Brégy

Is there anything Catholic writers can do to hasten the attainment of peace in this war-torn world? "Naturally we share with all other human beings the duties of praying and working for peace—which means also praying and working to minimize the suffering, to limit the extent and to destroy the causes of war. But we all work best by keeping, like the shoemaker, to our own last."

BOOKS OF THE YEAR

by the Editors

The annual Christmas survey of the books of 1939 will also be a feature of next week's issue. Naturally we have not read them all nor have our various contributors covered them all. Out of the thousands of volumes published in this country this year we are singling out a few novels, biographies, historical studies and the like, and telling why we name them. Some useful Christmas tips for a friend who likes nothing better than a deep chair and a good book.

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The Inner Forum

THE NEW INTEREST manifested by the Church in the social question is reflected in certain items in the diocesan press on the Chrysler strike in Detroit. Commenting on a dispute taking place on the home grounds, so to speak, the *Michigan Catholic* recently ran a front-page editorial entitled, "Let's Clear the Issue." It chides the three Detroit dailies with expressing an editorial policy which "has not helped to clarify the issues of the dispute." The editorial also exposes the technique of strike-breaking through developing a "back-to-work" movement among "loyal employees."

The *Michigan Catholic* begins its editorial, "The current dispute between the UAW-CIO and the Chrysler corporation may be settled by the time this appears. Every citizen of Detroit sincerely hopes so. The *Michigan Catholic,* however, feels that the issues involved have not been clearly presented to the public and that it would not serve its readers were no effort made to present them from a Catholic viewpoint. In this dispute there has been a request by the workers for a voice in the determination of production standards, which, when no agreement could be reached, was modified into a demand for arbitration of grievances. Both these demands are justified in the light of Catholic principles."

The *Pittsburgh Catholic* and the Chicago *New World* were among the diocesan organs to have reported this stand. The *New World* comments at some length in its newly-restored column, "The Big Broadcast." It points out the difference between the effort to have some say on conditions on the production line and any attempt to "Sovietize industry." It continues, "That labor is demanding social reforms makes it no more Communistic than the appeal of the Popes for reform in the Encyclicals that have been issued."

This is all in line with Pius XII's recent encyclical to the American hierarchy, which says in part: "It is not possible without injustice to deny or to limit either to the producers or to the laboring and farming classes the free faculty of uniting in associations by means of which they may defend their property rights and secure the betterment of the goods of soul and of body, as well as the honest comforts of life."

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